



**BUREAU OF SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES**

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[www.dca.ca.gov/bsis](http://www.dca.ca.gov/bsis)



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## **PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR (FACT SHEET)**

### **Private Investigator / Qualified Manager**

#### ***Requirements for Licensure***

A private investigator is an individual who (1) investigates crimes, (2) investigates the identity, business, occupation, character, etc., of a person, (3) investigates the location of lost or stolen property, (4) investigates the cause of fires, losses, accidents, damage or injury, or (5) secures evidence for use in court. Private investigators may protect persons only if such services are incidental to an investigation; they may *not* protect property. An individual, partnership, or corporation licensed as a private investigator may employ a qualified manager to manage the business on a day-to-day basis. To be eligible to apply for licensure as a private investigator/qualified manager, you must meet the following requirements:

- Be 18 or older.
- Undergo a criminal history background check through the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Have three years (2,000 hours each year, totaling 6,000 hours) of compensated experience in investigative work; or a law or police science degree plus two years (4,000 hours) of experience; or an AA degree in police science, criminal law, or justice and 2 ½ years (5,000 hours) of experience. Experience must be certified by your employer and have been received while you were employed as a sworn law enforcement officer, military police officer, insurance adjuster, employee of a licensed PI or reposessor, or arson investigator for a public fire suppression agency. (Work as a process server, public records researcher, custodial attendant for a law enforcement agency, bailiff, agent who collects debts in writing or by telephone after the debtor has been located, or person who repossesses property after it has been located is not considered qualifying experience.)
- Pass a two-hour multiple-choice examination covering laws and regulations, terminology, civil and criminal liability, evidence handling, undercover investigations and surveillance. A copy of the Private Investigator Act will be sent to you; and
- Upon notification that you have passed the examination, you must submit a licensing fee of \$175 to the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services, P.O. Box 989002, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002.

To apply for a Private Investigator license, submit your completed application, two recent passport-quality photographs, a \$50 application fee and a Private Investigator Live Scan form signed by the Live Scan Operator. A \$32 DOJ fingerprint processing fee and a \$24 FBI Fingerprint processing fee *must* be paid for *each* applicant at the Live Scan site. Send the application package to the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services, P.O. Box 989002, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002.

## Firearm Permit

Whether you work as a private investigator or qualified manager, you may *not* carry a gun on duty without having been issued a firearm permit by the Department of Consumer Affairs. To apply for a firearm permit, you must complete:

- A course in the Power to Arrest. The three-hour training covers responsibilities and ethics in citizen arrest, relationship with police, limitations on Power to Arrest, restrictions on searches and seizures, criminal and civil liabilities, terrorism, code of ethics and personal and employer liability. The training and exam may be administered by any licensee.
- A course in the carrying and use of firearms. The 14-hour (8 hours classroom, 6 hours range) training course covers moral and legal aspects, firearms nomenclature, weapons handling and shooting fundamentals, emergency procedures and range training. The course must be given by a Bureau-certified firearms training instructor at a Bureau-certified training facility. Written and range exams are administered at the end of the course. Costs of training are determined by the training facility. For a list of state-licensed training schools, call 1-800-952-5210; and
- Be a citizen of the United States or have permanent legal alien status. Submit a firearm permit application, an \$80 application fee and a Private Investigator License w/Firearm Permit Live Scan form signed by the Live Scan Operator. A \$28 Firearm Eligibility application, \$32 DOJ fingerprint processing fee and \$24 FBI fingerprint processing fee *must* be paid for *each* applicant at the Live Scan site. Send the application package to the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services, P.O. Box 989002, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002.

**Note:** a firearms qualification card expires two years from the date of issuance. An applicant must requalify four times during the life of the permit: twice during the first year after the date of issuance, and twice during the second year. Requalifications must be at least four months apart.

## Tear Gas Permit

The law requires those who wish to carry tear gas on duty to complete training approved by the Department of Consumer Affairs.

## Insurance

A private investigator who carries a firearm or provides armed bodyguard services must have \$1 million in insurance — \$500,000 for one loss due to bodily injury or death and \$500,000 for one loss due to injury or destruction of property.

To request an application for licensure as a private investigator or qualified manager, call 916-322-4000 or 1-800-952-5210, or visit our Web site: [www.dca.ca.gov/bsis](http://www.dca.ca.gov/bsis)

**"Protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services in exercising licensing, regulatory and disciplinary functions. Whenever the protection of the public is consistent with other interests sought to be promoted, the protection of the public shall be paramount."**